

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 281 445

HE 020 349

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TITLE Administrative Intrainstitutional Mobility: The Structuring of Opportunity. ASHE 1987 Annual Meeting Paper.
SPONS AGENCY Ohio State Univ., Columbus.
PUB DATE Feb 87
NOTE 37p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (San Diego, CA, February 13-17, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrators; Administrator Selection; *Career Ladders; College Administration; Employed Women; Employment Level; *Employment Opportunities; Employment Practices; Females; Higher Education; Males; Minority Groups; *Occupational Mobility; *Personnel Policy; Public Colleges; Research Universities; State Universities; Whites
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting; *Women Administrators

ABSTRACT

Position change of administrators at a large, public research university was studied during 1983-1985. Attention was directed to: the organizational configuration of administrative positions and position vacancies; the effect of personnel policies and practices regarding internal and external appointments, position creation, and sponsorship on the rate of position change; and the effect of personnel policies and practices on the representation of women, men, and minorities. Organizational configuration was operationally defined as the distribution of administrative and professional positions and position vacancies by administrative levels. For sponsored positions, candidates were identified prior to vacancy posting. Data on position vacancies and personnel records for 823 administrative position vacancies filled by internal candidates were assessed. Findings include: half of the top administrative positions were filled with external candidates; the majority of internally-filled positions were not open to competition; the proportion of sponsored positions increased with administrative level; and white men were overrepresented at the high administrative levels, while white women and minorities were overrepresented at the low levels. (SW)

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ADMINISTRATIVE INTRAINSTITUTIONAL MOBILITY:
THE STRUCTURING OF OPPORTUNITY

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A paper presented at the Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education

San Diego, California

February, 1987

This research was supported in part through an Affirmative Action grant and Seed Grant from The Ohio State University to the first author. The authors wish to acknowledge Chin Fen Chang for her assistance with the data analysis.

HE 020 349



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STUDY OF
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This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the San Diego Hilton in San Diego, California, February 14-17, 1987. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

Annual Meeting • February 14-17, 1987
San Diego Hilton • San Diego, California

ADMINISTRATIVE INTRAINSTITUTIONAL MOBILITY:

THE STRUCTURING OF OPPORTUNITY

Position changes are widely regarded as the primary means of career advancement for administrators¹ in colleges and universities. In the form of promotion, a change of positions approximates an increase in earnings, authority, and status. Moreover, because higher education administrators tend to have a lifetime involvement in one occupation, many expect progress in that career to continue within the broad domain of higher education, often within one institution (Sagaris and Moore, 1983).

As promotions,² position changes are one of the most important organizational rewards. The salience of promotions for administrative careers is reflected in the policies intended to enhance internal career advancement at many large public universities. These policies are often directed especially to the advancement of women and minorities. Position change within an organization is not only crucial for individual career advancement but also for meeting human resource staffing requirements.

Statement of the Problem

Position change is not a random event. It is a byproduct of organizational staffing decisions (Blau and Jussenius, 1976; Doeringer and Piore, 1971), and as such, the policies and procedures which guide the staffing decisions create a structure of opportunity for the persons within the organization. In recent years a body of literature has emerged regarding how women and men

¹Those individuals whose assignments require broad operational knowledge and permit considerable independent action either in supervising a department or solving complex policy issues.

²It is rare in organizations that position changes are demotions (Kanter, 1977). In the majority of moves, persons retain or increase their status and rewards. Using pay range as criteria, less than 3% of the position changes can be considered demotions. However, although it is recognized that the vast majority of these moves are promotions, the more general descriptor, position change, will be used in this study.

advance in the administrative ranks in higher education. Some authors have focused on individual career histories producing essential information about individual career paths which indicates that most administrative career advancement occurs through intrainstitutional mobility (Kuh, Evans and Duke, 1983; Moore, 1983; Sageria and Moore, 1983). However, the literature has not yielded information about an individual's chances for mobility or the extent to which ones' chances vary by gender and race. Other authors have examined individual strategies of career advancement and emphasized the importance of sponsorship (Moore, 1983; Kanter, 1977), and accrual mobility--the creation of new positions through individual initiative (Miner and Estler, 1985) to one's career progress. However, career strategies such as sponsorship or accrual have not been examined as mechanisms embodied in organizational policies and decision-making practices. In order to understand the extent of individual opportunity, we need to consider the structure of opportunity in which it occurs. Thus, we need to examine position changes within an employing organization in which all decision-making practices are guided by the same personnel policies and criteria such as salary and classification levels to assure consistency in the meaning of job titles. Further by analyzing policies, employment practices, and mobility within one organization, we can examine directly the opportunity structure operating for employees as well as the influence of the structure in shaping career outcomes.

This research examined the structure of opportunity for administrative staff members within a large academic organization. The study was designed to describe the organizational configuration of administrative positions and position vacancies, and to determine the effect of the personnel policies and decision-making practices on rate of position change for different groups of administrative staff within a large, public research university. Three questions guided the research:

What is the organizational configuration of administrative positions and position vacancies?

How do the personnel policies and practices regarding internal and external appointments, sponsorship, and position creation influence mobility for administrative staff members?

How do the personnel policies and practices regarding sponsorship and position creation influence the representation of women, men and minorities within the organizational configuration of positions?

Conceptual Perspectives

Traditional explanations of occupational opportunity or mobility have been grounded in a functionalist perspective of stratification. This perspective posits a competitive matching of particular positions with the skills and training of job seekers (Parsons, 1940). Thus, position change within an organization is viewed as a rational process whereby all eligible employees compete for all position vacancies. The functionalist approach assumes an open, competitive process in which employers have complete and accurate information about those seeking positions and position seekers have complete and accurate information about vacancies. The assumption of full knowledge has been questioned directly (Granovetter, 1974), and the notion of an open, competitive matching process has been challenged by a number of structural theorists who have argued that differences in mobility are a result of the structures of opportunity within organizations (Spilerman, 1977; Kanter, 1977; Ortiz, 1982; Rosenbaum, 1984). This study builds upon these antecedents and examines the influences of policy and practice upon the mobility of administrators within a higher education organization.

The concept of a structure of opportunity is especially well suited for examining the career mobility of higher education administrators because internal institutional position change has been the predominant mode of mobility (Sagarin, *in press*). The structure of opportunity of a higher education organization is of special import for understanding careers of women and minority administrators because they are more likely than white males to build their careers in one organization (Moore, 1983). Furthermore, they are less likely to have access to as many

career advancement opportunities or kinds of positions as their male and non-minority counterparts (Frances and Mensel, 1981; Moore, 1983).

Structure of opportunity: organizational configuration

With few exceptions, in the literature on administrative groups in organizations (Rosenbaum, 1979 and 1984; Gaertner, 1980; Moore and Sagarin, 1982; Sagarin and Moore, 1983), missing is the consideration that, to a considerable extent, opportunity for mobility reflects decisions of employing organizations as guided by policy and procedure. Yet a growing body of theory and research in occupational sociology, suggests that career advancement and job mobility for employees are affected in important ways by the structure of opportunity within organizations. Classifications associated with jobs, hierarchies of jobs, and staff movement from one job to another (White, 1970), number of job levels, distribution of jobs at various levels, the creation and elimination of jobs (Sorensen and Kalleberg, 1981), as well as specific personnel policies regarding careers (Rosenbaum, 1984) govern the career advancement of employees.

Moreover, the very shape of the organizational configuration of positions influences the opportunity for position change. In this study we operationally define the structure of opportunity as the organizational policies and decision making practices governing internal position change. Policy and practice over time produces an organizational configuration of positions which is the context for mobility. The distribution of positions within the configuration is an indicator of outcomes of past practice; the distribution of position vacancies provides an overview of the opportunity for position change within the organization. It is within this organizational context that decision making practices regarding individual position changes must be examined.

Structure of opportunity: individual decision making practices

Policies and decisions are formulated and implemented by individuals within the organization; simply stated, organizational behavior is collective human behavior (Schneider, 1983). Thus,

understanding the structure of opportunity requires identifying the behavior and practices of individual decision makers which comprise the structure and its consequences.

Granovetter (1981) argues that the neglect of the process of matching persons to jobs is a major defect in both sociological and economic theoretical explanations of differences in occupational mobility. He moves beyond traditional theories of signaling and searching (Spence, 1974; Stiglitz, 1975) by positing that these are not sequential activities, but rather that both the employer and employee may (or may not) be searching or signaling. For example, nearly a third of his random sample of professional, technical, and managerial job changers denied having carried out any active search for their current position (a percentage which was strongly related to income: the higher the salary, the less likely the individual searched for the position). Another example of the complexity of the person-job matching process is the high incidence of employers who created positions only because they had identified a person who they considered particularly appropriate for the work.

Granovetter conceptualizes the person-job matching process as an information problem in which neither the employer or the employee has complete information with which to guide decisions. He found that both employers and employees prefer information derived from personal contacts as they consider this information to be less costly in time and energy to acquire and of higher quality than information obtained from impersonal sources. Thus, Granovetter argues that traditional examples of signals, such as educational credentials, are not the main conveyor of information for employers. Employers prefer to rely on personal recommendations of persons they know. Since there are typically large numbers of people qualified for positions in terms of traditional qualifications (such as education or experience), personal recommendations provide a means of screening which is more certain and less costly than that based on paper credentials.

These findings have relevance for examining mobility within a higher education organization because they suggest an explanation for internal position change that moves beyond human resource staffing needs to the means employed by individual decision makers to enhance their selection decisions. His findings suggest that when faced with matching a person and a job, the hiring official is likely to rely upon candidates known (or recommended by someone personally known) to him or her rather than relying upon paper credentials. The extent to which one is personally known to the hiring officials influences one's ability to move, or stated differently, the extent to which individuals are known influences the way in which the structure of opportunity operates on behalf of those individuals.

Furthermore, the likelihood of being personally known or recommended differs for different groups, such as women, men and minorities. Organizational studies indicate that managerial promotion decisions are often based on who is perceived to be trustworthy which often is a matter of who is perceived to be like one's self (Kanter, 1977). The higher the level of the position in the organization, the more difficult it is to characterize the skills and abilities necessary for success; beyond basic qualifications, the more likely it is that trust and discretion are important to those striving to fill a position of considerable responsibility in an organization. Furthermore, the use of contact networks and social status becomes more pronounced in those work settings in which performance is most difficult to assess (Pfeffer, 1977). Evidence of trust and discretion are not easily found in paper credentials; rather decision makers turn to persons known to them or perceived to be like themselves to fill important positions. Being perceived appropriate on personal factors and being known to the decision maker or known to someone the decision maker trusts often become the criteria for selection. Common origins and experiences tend to be used as indicators of personal similarity, and therefore, trustworthiness. Thus, there is a tendency for decision makers to reproduce themselves (termed homosocial reproduction) when they seek to fill positions which are not easily characterized by specific skills and abilities (Kanter, 1977). Ascribed characteristics, such as gender or race, are often the obvious characteristics to be

reproduced. This is reflected in higher education in which the criteria for administrative success are often amorphous. For example, after an initial screening for educational background and professional experiences, hiring decisions for many administrative positions often depend upon leadership skills or ability to work with others (Sagarin, 1985). The difficulty in evaluating such qualities results in subjective assessments of ease of communication or personal comfort with the individual--assessments which may be more a result of commonality of background and experience than of requisite skills for the position in question.

In addition, the practice of reproducing one's self has consequences for women and minorities in higher education because white men hold the vast majority of the administrative positions. Thus, to the extent that personalized decision making or homosocial reproduction are operating in a particular setting, the structure of opportunity will differ for men, women and minorities. This is not to say that only internal moves will be influenced by these practices; clearly, persons who are external to the institution may be known, or personally recommended also. In fact, the extent to which persons internal to the institution make position changes relative to the extent positions are filled through external recruitment is one function of the structure of opportunity within the organization.

Furthermore, the extent to which position vacancies are filled internally is considered one factor in determining whether the organization recruits from an internal labor market (Althauser and Kalleberg, 1981). The existence of an internal market in a particular organizational setting may be examined by the degree to which current employees are protected from external competition and the degree to which entry into the organization is restricted to certain (low) administrative levels. Thus, the pattern of internal appointments to external appointments reflects the outcome of policy and practice which has direct bearing on the opportunity for individuals to move within an institution.

Structure of opportunity: the practice of sponsorship

Another practice shaping the process of intrainstitutional position change is sponsorship. Turner (1960) explicated the classic conceptualization of sponsorship using ideal-typical patterns of upward mobility characteristic of British and American school systems. He differentiates between what he labels as sponsored and contest mobility. Sponsored mobility is described as a system in which individuals are chosen for positions on the basis of individual merit as perceived prior to competition for any particular position or in lieu of competition. Contest mobility is described as a system in which individuals compete in an open contest for a given position which is awarded on the basis of individual merit as perceived at the time of the competition. Thus, in open contest mobility individuals are selected for their qualifications relative to others who choose to compete for the same position, while in sponsored mobility the selection is made without regard to other possible applicants but rather in terms of the potential of the individual as perceived by a sponsor.

Sponsorship is one aspect of the more broadly defined mentor-protégé relationship; that is, sponsorship occurs when an individual in a position of influence recommends or promotes an individual as a good candidate for a particular position. As an individual career strategy, sponsorship is seen as important to career success and mobility in a variety of organizational settings (Hennig and Jardim, 1977; Merriam, 1983), and in fact, has been identified as a prevalent mode for administrators' mobility (Moore, 1983). Sponsorship, as used here, may or may not be a function of a complex mentor-protégé relationship. The advantages of sponsorship for the one sponsored include career coaching and access to positions or decision makers which might not otherwise be possible through ordinary channels. With few exceptions in the higher education literature, the advantages of sponsorship to the sponsor or to the organization has received less attention in the literature (Moore, 1982; Moore and Salimbene, 1981).

Sponsorship of an individual for a position within an organization is potentially beneficial to both the sponsor and the organization. Assuming that sponsorship is based on knowledge of and trust of

another, sponsoring is means of providing valued information in the person-job matching process (Granovetter, 1981). Sponsors provide personalized information which is more highly valued for decision making than what other candidates offer in paper credentials. For the organization, a benefit may well be the efficiency of filling a position without an extensive search process (Rosenbaum, 1984). The more efficient means of selecting employees for advancement may be an early identification, selection, and grooming of those candidates most likely to meet the needs of the organization. In terms of efficiency, this may mean selecting candidates prior to posting job vacancies, or more succinctly, sponsored mobility.

Sponsorship may also be viewed as the most effective means of moving persons internally. It may serve as the most direct means of dealing with the preference for personalized recommendations and the interest in identifying persons one can trust. Sponsorship may result from perceived social similarity and homogeneity (Kanter, 1977), thus providing a direct opportunity for one to reproduce one's self in another position. Therefore, although sponsorship may be perceived by individual decision makers as efficiently and effectively serving the organization by matching persons and jobs, the consequence may be that women and minorities are less likely to benefit from the practice of sponsorship because they are least likely to be identified as socially and personally similar to the potential sponsors.

Structure of opportunity: the practice of creating new positions

Traditional images of internal position change suggest that persons move from one previously held position to another (White, 1970). Although new jobs are periodically added to the array of organizational positions, they would be an alternative to the standard approach for increasing one's responsibility by taking on a vacated position. Thus, to the extent then that new positions are created within an organization, they represent an increase in the extent of opportunity for position change.

One form of position creation within higher education organization has been examined as an individual strategy for career advancement. Miner and Estler (1985) identified evolved responsibility or accrual mobility as an alternative process of position creation in which an employee first accrues responsibility, skills, or knowledge in a current position which exceeds normal growth in that position. The accrued changes are then institutionalized by formally recognizing the additional growth and changing the title, salary or job content--essentially creating a new position for the employee who has reshaped the position. As an individual career strategy, accrual mobility may depend upon the initiation of the employee; however, it is conceptualized as a dynamic process involving both the employer and employee interacting over a period of time. Thus, creating new positions through an accrual process requires organizational decision making which, in turn, suggests the need to examine the practice not only as an individual career strategy, but also as a function of the policies and practices which support position creation.

Although research has not measured the extent of accrual mobility; there is, however, sufficient evidence to suggest that accrual mobility accounts for some portion of the new positions which are created. Thus, certain new positions may be created to acknowledge or reward persons in the organization. Other new positions may be created to meet specified organizational needs without a particular person in mind to fill the position. Despite the motivation prompting the creation of new positions, they provide a means for an organization to facilitate career development and advancement for employees. Research, however, indicates that the use of personal contacts is even more important in changing to new positions within an organization than previously existing positions (Granovetter, 1974). The implication may be that organizations hold new positions in abeyance until a person is identified as appropriate for the task or they may create jobs around people. Thus, the practice of filling new positions may be closely tied to the practice of sponsorship: selection highly dependent upon personalized information and the perceived social and personal similarity of the candidate to the decision maker. Concomitantly, the practice of filling

new positions may have similar implications for women and minorities: just as they may be less likely to be sponsored (Kanter, 1977), they may be less likely to be selected for new positions and for the same reasons.

The Structure of Opportunity: Institutionalized policy and practice

Each of the mechanisms described (personalized information, homosocial reproduction, sponsorship and position creation) may be viewed as highly personal, informal, serendipitous and isolated practices. However, if the aggregate consequences of these practices produces patterns of mobility which differ for different groups, such as women and minorities, then these individual practice are shaping the opportunity structure of the organization. If patterns can be identified, then the practices are not simply dynamics operating on an individual level, but in fact, comprise a structure of opportunity within the organization. Thus, the present research examined the rate of mobility and the influence of specific practices on the outcomes of mobility of different groups in order to explore the structure of opportunity as it enacted in one higher education organization.

Research Methodology

Data Source and Collection

This study investigated position change of members of the administrative staff in a large, public research university over a two year period (1983-1985). The case study method was used to explore in fine detail the manner in which one organization structures opportunity for its employees through its policies and decision-making practices. This university was well suited for examining mobility in a large organization. During the 1984-85 academic year the university employed 2,602 administrative staff employees. Furthermore, its personnel policies regarding hiring, internal position change, and benefits are similar to many of the 100 research universities that employ approximately one-third of the higher education workforce (Plisko and Stern, 1985).

Data from the personnel records of the 823 administrative position vacancies filled by internal candidates constitute the data set. The population included the principal administrative officers and senior administrative and professional staff, and unclassified staff positions categorized into sixteen salary ranges.³ The data set represents a subset of data gathered from the personnel records of the 2,297 administrative position vacancies posted between 1978 and 1985. Demographic information was purged from the institutional database for all persons who had left the institution prior to December of 1982; therefore, the most current two years were chosen for analysis as these years afford the most complete data. This two year interval represents a period of stability in the number of positions unlike other years of significant growth or contraction in positions, and this pattern of stability is projected to continue. Also analysis of the data for each year (not reported here) indicates marked similarity in position change for the two years, suggesting that this two year period is appropriately treated as a single period.

Data concerning position vacancies were gathered from four sources: position postings, composites of position title classification, paper files for each position vacancy, and the institutional personnel database. Data from original personnel files were retrieved, codified, entered, verified and merged with computerized personnel data. The use of the demographic and career records provided accurate and highly credible information.

The institutional salary structure was used to examine the distribution of positions, vacancies and persons within the administrative and professional ranks. (Table I provides examples of position titles by salary range.) The office of personnel assigns to each position a salary range derived from a formal factoring system which takes into account six criteria of the position: knowledge,

³Department chairperson, research assistant, post-doctoral researcher and librarian positions were excluded because their functional responsibilities are associated with faculty-research roles more so than administrative-professional roles at the university under study. Also positions within agricultural research units, health science units, and the university libraries were excluded.

skills and abilities required, interpersonal relationships, supervision received and given, mental demand, and responsibility and impact. The comprehensive system of factoring used to determine

Insert Table 1 About Here

the appropriate range for each position results in a hierarchy of positions based on relative salary range. Although salary ranges overlap, there are qualitative differences between each designated range. This system of positions is consistent with descriptions in the literature of well-defined structures of positions which have earnings assigned to them; thus, the earnings are considered to be independent of the individual occupying the position (Granovetter, 1981; Dunlop, 1957). Therefore, the ranges are more than salary indicators; they provide a hierarchical structuring of the positions within the organization based on the qualitative assessments of the formal factoring system.

Consequently, for purposes of these analyses, the University salary ranges were categorized into five administrative levels. Administrative level I, the lower end of the continuum, included ranges 57 to 59 and level II included ranges 60 to 62. Administrative level III included ranges 63 to 65, and level IV ranges 66 to 68. At the upper end of the continuum, level V included levels 69 to 71 plus 00. These categories were developed after considering the salary ranges for administrative and professional staff positions, internal distinctions between unclassified and senior positions, and the association between the distribution of position vacancies and total positions.⁴

⁴Three primary considerations influenced the category development. First, examining the midpoint dollar value of each pay range, gaps were identified (see Technical Note 1). Second, categorization also reflects the institutional distinction made between unclassified (pay ranges 57 to 65) and senior level (pay ranges 66 to 00) positions. Third, an examination of the distribution of position vacancies by pay range indicated that categorization would not distort the analyses (see Technical Note 2).

Operational definitions

Four dimensions are conceptualized in this study as comprising the structure of opportunity. They are operationally defined as follows: Organizational configuration is the distribution of administrative and professional positions and position vacancies by administrative levels. Internal and external appointments are the two means by which any position vacancy is filled. Current employees may apply as internal candidates for vacancies after they have passed their probationary period or within twelve months after being terminated as a result of a reduction in force. All other candidates are considered to be external. Sponsored positions are those positions in which an individual was named as under consideration prior to the posting of the position. Although such positions are posted and are considered to be open for application to both internal and external applicants, there are few other applicants and those who do apply are rarely interviewed. In virtually every case of sponsorship, the person appointed is the person for whom the position was designated. Lastly, new positions include newly created positions as well as reclassified positions (changes in the title, status, or salary range of a position resulting typically from a request from a department for an audit of the position). All reclassifications are posted as position vacancies open for application.

Data Analysis

To illustrate the organizational configuration operating in this setting, descriptive data (number and percentage) are provided on the distribution of administrative positions and position vacancies by administrative level. Additionally descriptive data are provided as to the extent of the practices of internal and external appointments, position change to sponsored and contest positions, and position change to new and existing positions.

To determine the extent to which intrainstitutional mobility differs for different groups, position changes were calculated as the number and percentage of white men, white women and minorities who changed positions within the two year interval relative to their total proportions within the

administrative and professional staff. An index of representation illustrates a distribution of persons across an organization's reward structure which would be expected in an open and competitive arena assuming equivalent qualifications in the aggregate. Thus, in this study the index of representation is a profile of how persons are distributed by gender and race by administrative level relative to what would be expected according to their total distribution.

Gender and race representation was calculated following approaches used for age standardization (Kaufman and Spilerman, 1982). That is, if P_{ma} = proportion of persons who are men (m) in administrative level (a), and P_{m+} = proportion of the total administrative and professional staff (+) who are men (m), then the index of representation for white men is given by:

$$IR_{ma} = P_{ma} / P_{m+}$$

Similarly, for white women the formula is:

$$IR_{wa} = P_{wa} / P_{w+}$$

and for minorities:

$$IR_{mina} = P_{mina} / P_{min+}$$

Thus, to the extent that IR_{ma} , IR_{wa} , or IR_{mina} exceeds 1.00, the referent group is overrepresented in the administrative level (a); to the extent that IR_{ma} , IR_{wa} , or IR_{mina} is below 1.00, the referent group is underrepresented in the administrative level (a).

An index of representation was calculated for white men, white women and minorities illustrating their representation 1) within the total administrative and professional staff by administrative levels, 2) their representation within position changes by administrative levels, 3) their representation within sponsored position changes by administrative levels, and 4) their representation within new position changes by administrative levels--in each case relative to their distribution in the total administrative and professional ranks. Total representation

combining all levels is assumed to subsume the effect of individual differences. This assumption is not meant to deny that individual differences in relevant qualifications may account for some differences in intrainstitutional mobility. However, to the extent that differences in mobility emerge as a result of the impact of practices upon various groups, then such differences would call into question the implicit assumption that policies and practices operate equitably for all members of the organization.

The total distribution of white men, white women and minorities in the administrative and professional ranks was used as an approximation of potential candidate pools for position vacancies. All internal employees of the organization are eligible to compete for any other position within the organization for which they qualify. Not all persons are qualified for all positions, for example, some administrative positions require faculty rank or tenure. Nonetheless, as a group, the members of an administrative and professional staff are a highly qualified group. At the least, the minimal qualifications for most positions include far more persons within an administrative and professional staff than they exclude (Granovetter, 1981). Thus, the total distribution of white women, white men, and minorities was used to calculate the representation of each group within each administrative level and by position change practice.

Findings

To understand the structure of opportunity within which intrainstitutional mobility occurred between 1983 and 1985, we will first consider the organizational configuration. Distribution of all administrative and professional staff positions by administrative level, the distribution of internal and external appointments to position vacancies by administrative level, the distribution of internal position changes by administrative level, as well as the distribution of sponsored position changes and newly created position changes by administrative level will be described. With the total population of administrative and professional positions serving as

baseline data, the distribution of white men, white women and minorities will be analyzed and illustrated according to their indices of representation by administrative level.

Organizational Configuration: Positions by Administrative Levels. The distribution of positions by administrative level provides an overview of the organizational configuration in which positions are placed. As Figure 1 illustrates, 232 (6.3%) of the total 3,691 administrative positions which were held during 1983-85 interval, were at administrative level I. Most of the positions fall into administrative levels II and III: 1,224 (33.2%) and 1155 (31.3%), respectively.

Insert Figure 1 About Here

There are 469 (12.7%) positions at level IV and 611 (16.6%) at level V. The shape of this distribution is of interest as it contrasts with the widely held notion of a pyramid of administrative positions within higher education organization. The pyramid implies that there are increasingly fewer positions for which to compete as one moves up the pay levels; however, the distribution of positions by administrative levels in this organization conveys a structure of opportunity strikingly different than that typically assumed.

Position Vacancies: Internal and External Appointments. Of a total 702 position vacancies in this two year interval, internal candidates were appointed to 57.1% (401) and external candidates were appointed to 42.9% (301). The distribution of these appointments varies by administrative level as indicated in Figure 2. The proportion of internal appointments increases from 40.8% (20) at the lowest administrative level I, to 51.7% (138) at administrative level II to a high of

Insert Figure 2 About Here

65.5% (169) at administrative level III. Administrative level IV is similar at 65.2% (45). The proportion of internal candidates decreases to 49.2% (29) at the highest administrative level V. Thus, the extent of internal appointments relative to external appointments does not consistently afford protection for current employees from external competition. Rather, these findings suggest that internal candidates have a proportionately better chance of changing jobs at middle administrative levels than at the top or bottom. The chances of an internal appointment versus an external appointment are less likely at the highest administrative level--the reverse of a pattern implicit in descriptions of organizations protecting their employees by restricting their recruitment to an internal labor market (Rosenbaum, 1985; Althauser and Kalleberg, 1981).

Intrainstitutional Position Change by Administrative Level. The distribution of the position changes made internally by administrative level provides another view of the organizational configuration that structures opportunity within an organization. The shape of this distribution does not mirror the distribution of positions by administrative level. Rather, as Figure 3 indicates, most position changes within the institution are located in the mid-level positions. The

Insert Figure 3 About Here

vast majority (76.0 percent or 294) of the 382 positions filled by internal candidates were in administrative levels II and III, at the lower and middle range of the administrative position continuum. Positions in administrative levels IV and V, the senior level positions at the high end of the continuum, accounted for 18.9 percent (72) of the positions filled. Lastly, administrative level I at the low end of the continuum accounted for the 4.2 percent (16) the smallest percentage of position changes.

Position Changes by Sponsored and Open Contest Positions by Administrative Level. Sixty-six percent (252) of the total number of positions filled were sponsored positions and 34.0% (130) were open contest positions. The proportion of sponsored positions increases with the

administrative category. The higher the administrative level, the greater the proportion of sponsored positions and the less the proportion of open contest positions (see Figure 4). For

Insert Figure 4 About Here

example, at level I 25.0% (4) of the positions are sponsored, in contrast to level V where 74.1% (20) of the vacant positions were sponsored. These data suggest that the higher the salary, prestige and status of a position the more likely an individual is chosen for such a position without an open search.

Position Changes by New and Existing Positions by Administrative Level. Some 67.5% (257) of the positions filled internally were new positions and 32.5% (124) were previously existing positions. The largest proportions of new positions filled internally are at administrative levels

Insert Figure 5 About Here

III and IV, while the largest proportions of existing positions filled internally are at administrative levels I and V (see Figure 5).

Distribution of Positions by Administrative Level, Gender and Race. In order to illustrate the proportion of white men, white women and minorities by administrative level relative to their distribution in the total administrative staff, indices of representation were calculated (see Figure 6). When we examine the over- and under- representation of each group by administrative level from the baseline of 1.0, the patterns are striking. Both white women and minorities are

Insert Figure 6 About Here

overrepresented at the two lower administrative levels and underrepresented at the two upper administrative levels. The representation of white men is the opposite; white men are underrepresented at the low end of the administrative level continuum and overrepresented at the top three administrative levels. The distribution of white men, white women, and minorities by administrative level illustrates the outcomes of past recruitment and promotion practices. The patterns of white women and minorities are strikingly similar. White men clearly enjoy an advantaged position within the organizational configuration.

Position Change by Administrative Level, Gender and Race.

When we examine the position change by administrative level for white women, white men, and minorities, the indices of representation indicate that white women and minorities are highly overrepresented in position change occurring at administrative levels I and II and underrepresented at administrative levels IV and V (see Figure 7). White men's indices reveal the

Insert Figure 7 About Here

inverse: white men are highly underrepresented at the lower administrative levels and overrepresented at the higher administrative levels. Patterns of mobility clearly differ for white men, white women, and minorities, and the difference in outcomes work to the disadvantage of white women and minorities.

Position Change to Sponsored and Open Positions by Gender and Race. When we examine the position change to sponsored positions by administrative level for white women, white men, and minorities, the indices of representation illustrated in Figure 8 indicate an overrepresentation of white women and minorities at the two lower administrative levels and, for white women, an underrepresentation at the two upper administrative levels. The minority index is irregular with

an unusually high overrepresentation at the lowest administrative level and a slight

Insert Figure 8 About Here

overrepresentation at the top administrative level. White men's indices follow the pattern established above: underrepresented in the lower administrative levels and overrepresented at the higher levels. Sponsorship works to the benefit of white men, and consequently to the disadvantage of white women and minorities.

Position Change to New Positions by Gender and Race. When we examine the position change to new positions by administrative level for women, men, and minorities, the indices of representation show the same consistent pattern with men underrepresented at administrative levels I and II and overrepresented at IV and V (see Figure 9). Women show the reverse pattern, and minorities in this case are overrepresented in the lower administrative levels and not represented at all in the

Insert Figure 9 About Here

higher administrative levels. The creation of new positions within an organization serves to benefit the mobility of white men, and consequently work to the disadvantage of white women and minorities.

Summary and Discussion

This study examined the structure of opportunity for intrainstitutional mobility of administrative staff members within a large, public research university. In higher education, administrators build their careers by changing positions; thus, their careers are shaped by the structure of opportunity which exists within the institution. That is, the opportunity for position change is influenced by the organizational configuration of positions. Findings from this study contradict the

conventional wisdom that the administrative structure is shaped like a pyramid and that it is the increasingly fewer jobs at the top which accounts for the low mobility of administrators. The bulge in this organization is not at the bottom but in the middle. Moreover, a significant constraint to intrainstitutional mobility in this setting is the practice of filling half (50.8%) of the positions at the top administrative level with external candidates.

The majority of internally filled positions are not open to competition. Rather individuals are sponsored through a process in which they are not formally or openly evaluated for their merits for filling a position. Further, the proportion of sponsored positions increases with administrative level. Over 70% of the positions at the top three levels are effectively closed to any candidates other than the person sponsored.

The efficacy of the structure of opportunity is striking when the mobility of white women, white men and minorities is compared. Using the total representation of white men, white women, and minorities within the institution as a base for determining parity in opportunity, it is clear that white men are overrepresented at the high administrative levels and white women and minorities are overrepresented at the low administrative levels. Also, institutionalized practices such as sponsorship and position creation disproportionately benefit white men. While it could be argued that the total distribution is a remnant of past practice, the current policies and practices of sponsorship and position creation are institutionalized mechanisms which perpetuate discrimination against white women and minorities.

This study extends and refines the concept of opportunity structure and operationally defines it using institutional policy and decision making practices. The research offers an early direct test of the structure of opportunity by looking at position changes as outcomes of specific policies and decision making practices. Further research should consider a direct examination of the individual characteristics as well as the structural characteristics and their effect upon mobility.

Further, it is necessary to explore other policies and practices, such as the hiring of individuals external to the organization and the exit of employees from the organization. These considerations will further enhance the understanding of the structure of opportunity in a given organization and its impact upon diverse groups. Research is also needed in other higher education organizations which explains the impact of structures of opportunity across the various kinds of academic institutions. Lastly, work is needed that could translate the concepts and data into practical change strategies for the benefit of higher education organizations and their employees.

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TABLE I

Administrative Levels with Representative Position Titles and Ranges

Administrative Levels	Position Titles	Salary Range	Dollar Range*
V	Dean University Treasurer Director-Residence & Dining	69-71 & 00	49,260-58,500
IV	University Registrar Senior Computer Specialist Manager-Staff Development	66-68	36,840-44,160
III	Assoc. Dir. Financial Aid Assistant to the Provost Area Coordinator	63-65	27,780-33,480
II	Administrative Associate I Graphic Illustrator Academic Counselor	60-62	20,880-25,140
I	University Contract Aide Supervisor of Transportation and Messenger Service Orientation Assistant	57-59	15,600-19,140

*Midpoint of lower level and upper level of the range. 00 level is an open salary level without fixed dollar amounts.

Technical Note 1

Administrative & Professional
1985-87 Pay Category and Range

<u>Pay Category</u>	<u>Pay Range</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
V	00		
	71	44160	72840
	70	40560	66480
	69	37440	61080
IV	68	33720	54600
	67	31080	50040
	66	28320	45360
III	65	25920	41040
	64	23760	37200
	63	21720	33840
II	62	19680	30600
	61	18120	27720
	60	16560	25200
I	59	15240	23040
	58	13920	21000
	57	12600	18600

Technical Note 2

Position Vacancies Filled Internally or Externally by Pay Range, 1978-1985

Year	Appointment	Pay Range																Total Vacancies Filled	%
		57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	00		
1984-85	Internal	0	0	7	24	21	27	46	27	24	6	8	2	2	1	0	7	202	56.3
	External	7	2	9	19	27	22	26	6	13	6	4	3	0	0	0	13	157	43.7
1983-84	Internal	0	1	12	19	16	31	21	29	22	10	14	5	3	1	1	14	199	58.0
	External	3	4	4	17	24	20	27	9	8	0	9	2	2	1	1	13	144	42.0
1982-83	Internal	0	2	4	14	13	18	17	10	15	6	7	3	5	0	0	6	120	49.8
	External	4	3	3	12	26	13	15	19	9	3	6	3	1	0	0	4	121	50.2
1981-82	Internal	0	3	3	17	9	19	9	27	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	4	107	60.1
	External	0	4	1	10	5	25	5	7	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	6	71	39.9
1980-81	Internal	1	7	9	17	12	29	12	20	3	7	5	0	3	0	0	5	130	76.5
	External	4	3	3	3	1	9	5	2	1	0	3	0	3	0	2	1	40	23.5
1979-80	Internal	4	4	12	10	3	31	18	20	2	5	2	1	2	1	0	4	119	68.4
	External	4	1	4	10	8	12	6	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	55	31.6
1978-79	Internal	5	6	9	12	16	22	18	14	5	8	2	2	4	0	0	4	127	66.5
	External	6	3	9	4	6	11	6	10	1	2	1	0	3	0	0	2	64	33.5
Total		38	43	89	188	187	289	231	203	114	55	74	22	29	4	4	86	1656	

Figure 1

Administrative & Professional Staff Positions by Administrative Level: 1983-85

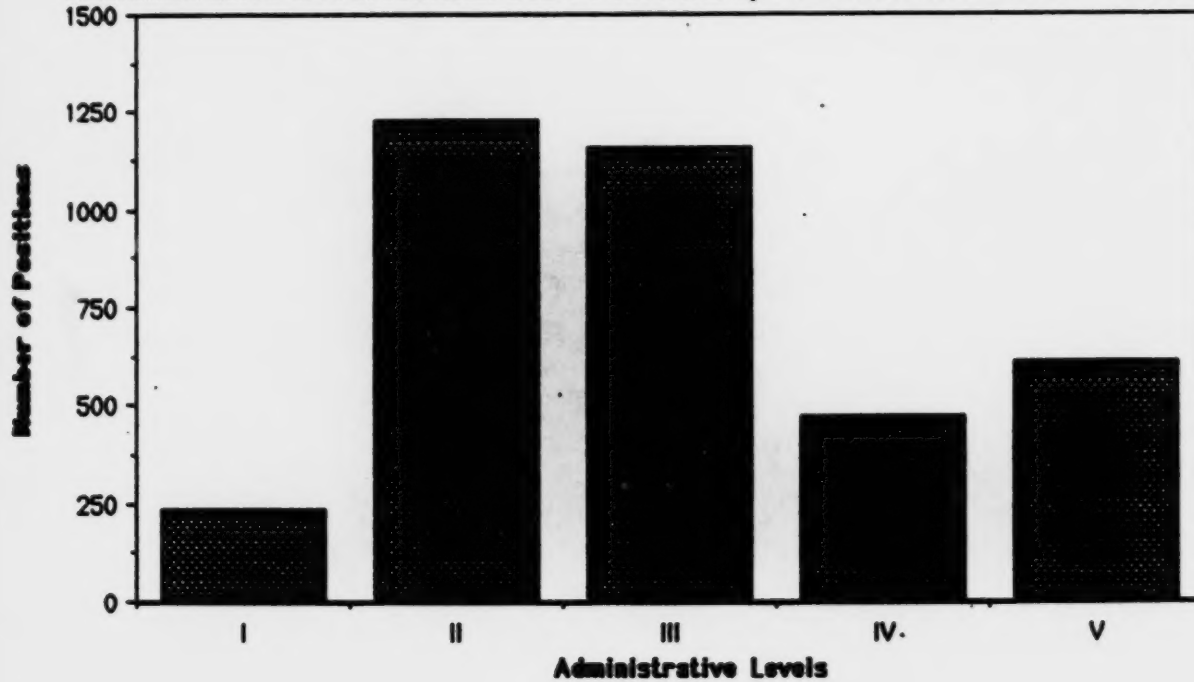


Figure 2

Position Vacancies: Internal and External Appointments 1983-85

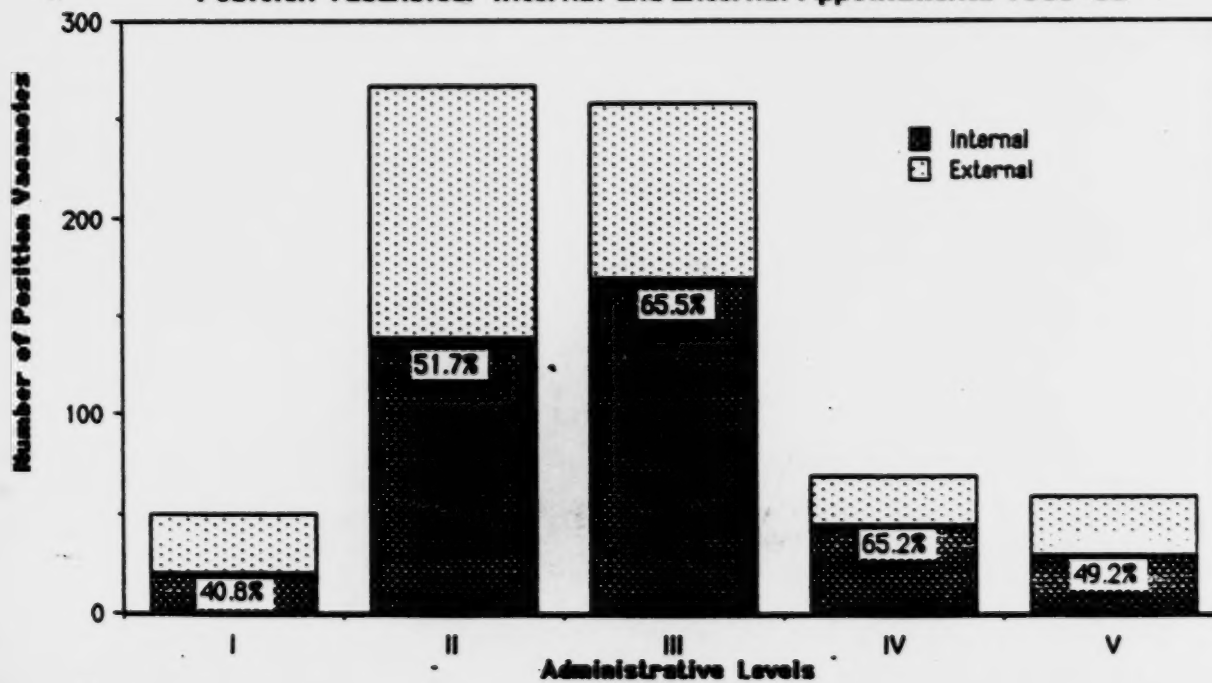


Figure 3

Intrainstitutional Position Change by Administrative Level: 1983-85

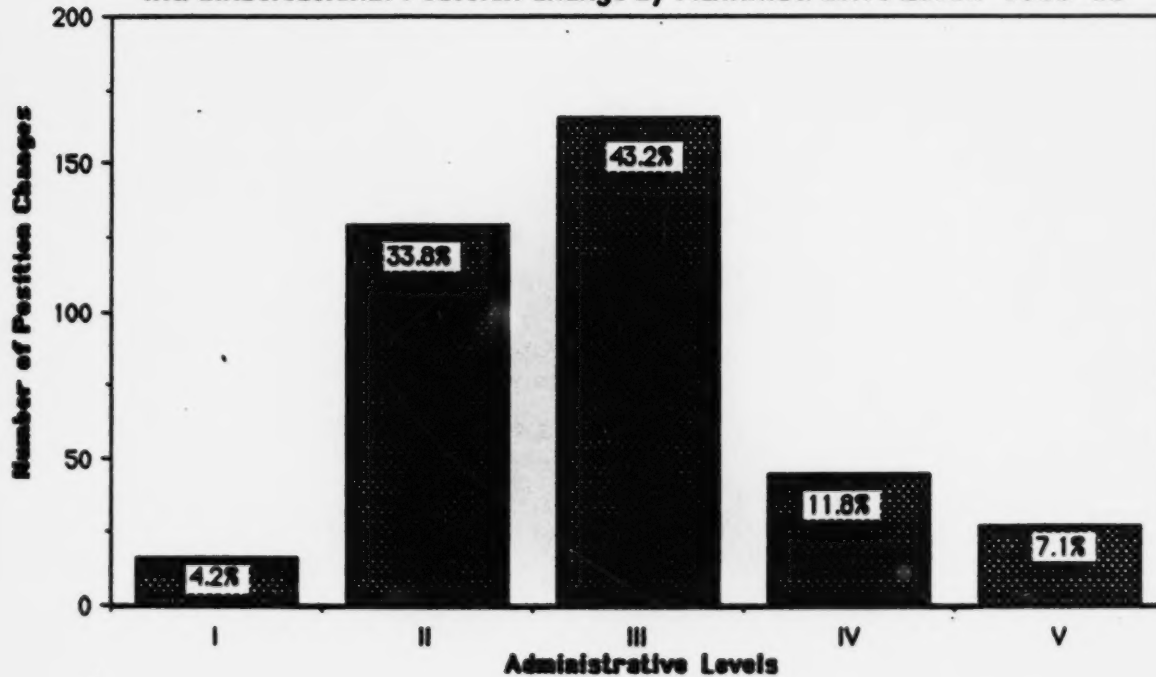


Figure 4

Sponsored Position Change by Administrative Level: 1983-85

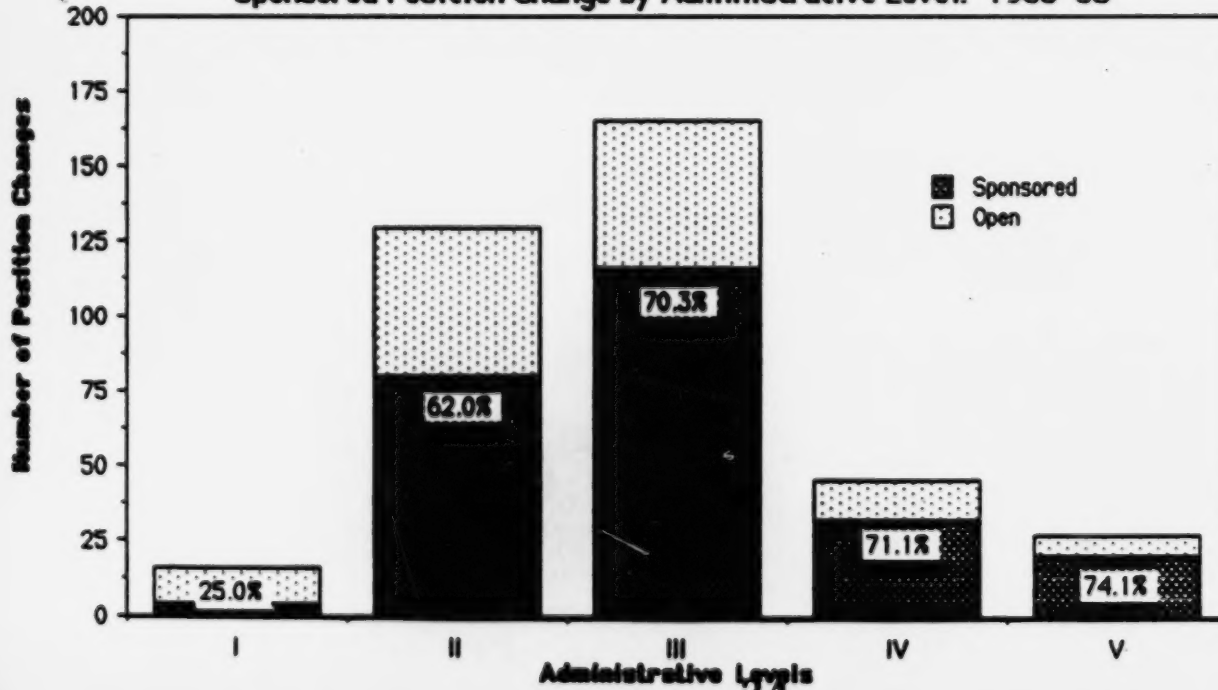


Figure 5
New Position Change by Administrative Level: 1983-85

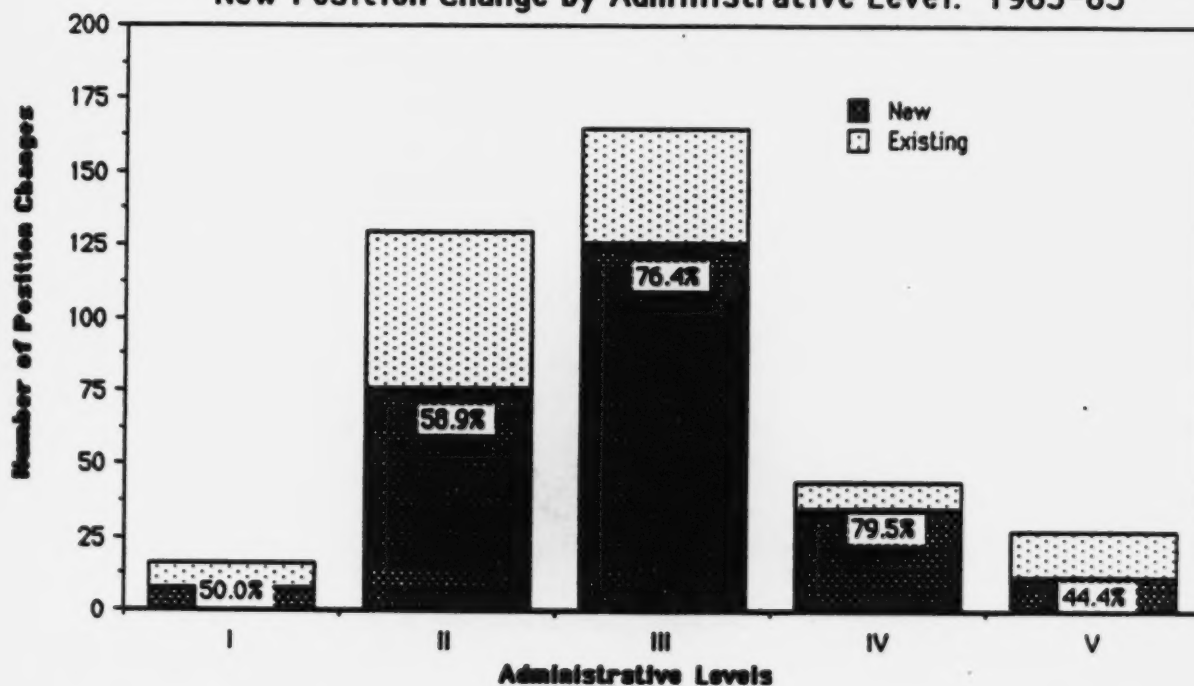


Figure 6
Distribution of Positions by Administrative Level and Gender & Race: 1983-85

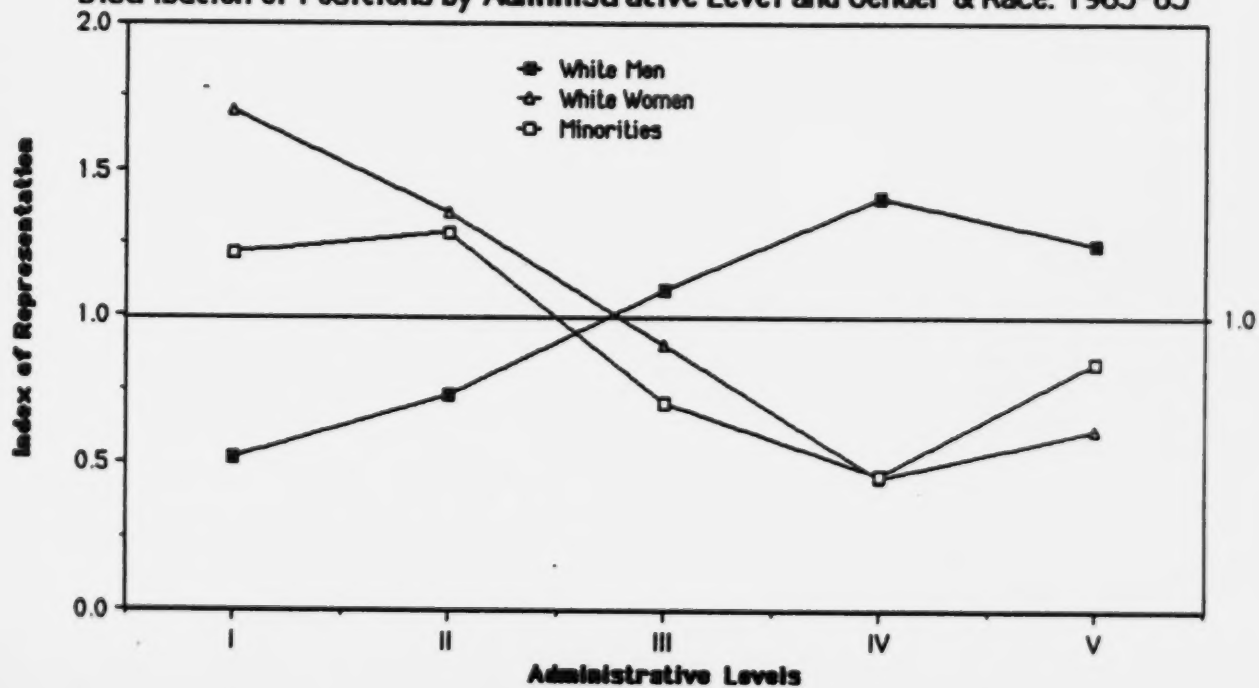


Figure 7

Position Change by Administrative Level and Gender & Race: 1983-85

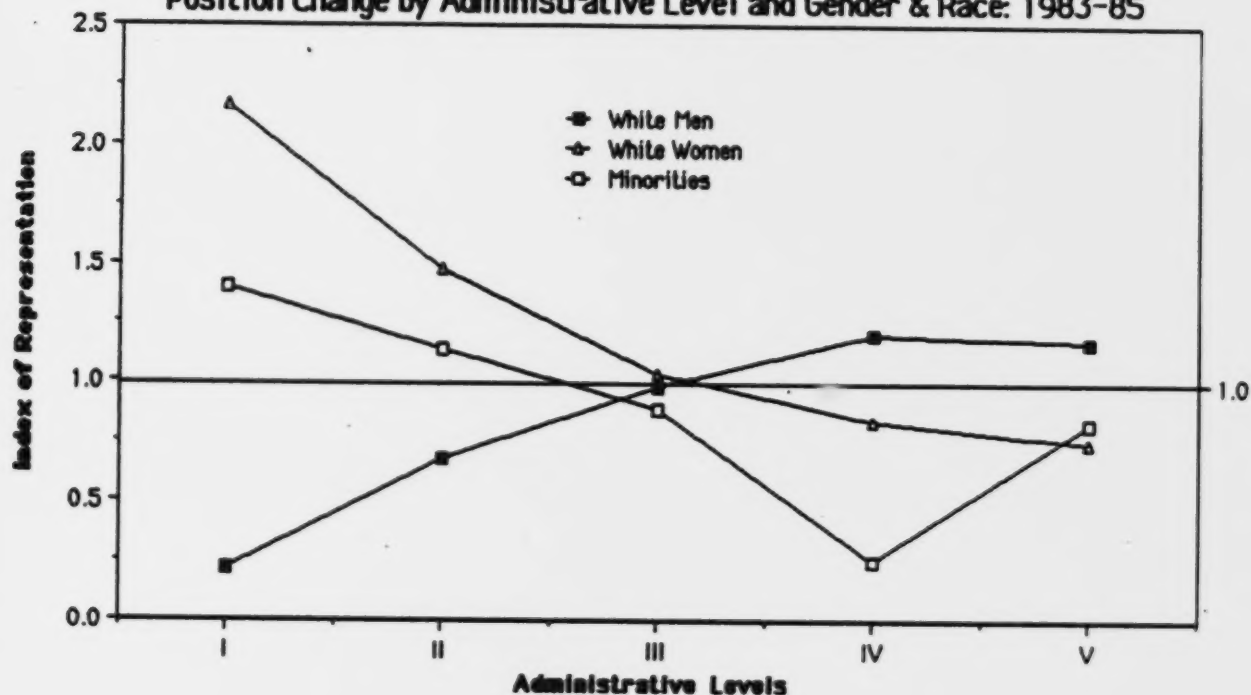


Figure 8

Sponsored Position Change by Administrative Level and Gender & Race: 1983-85

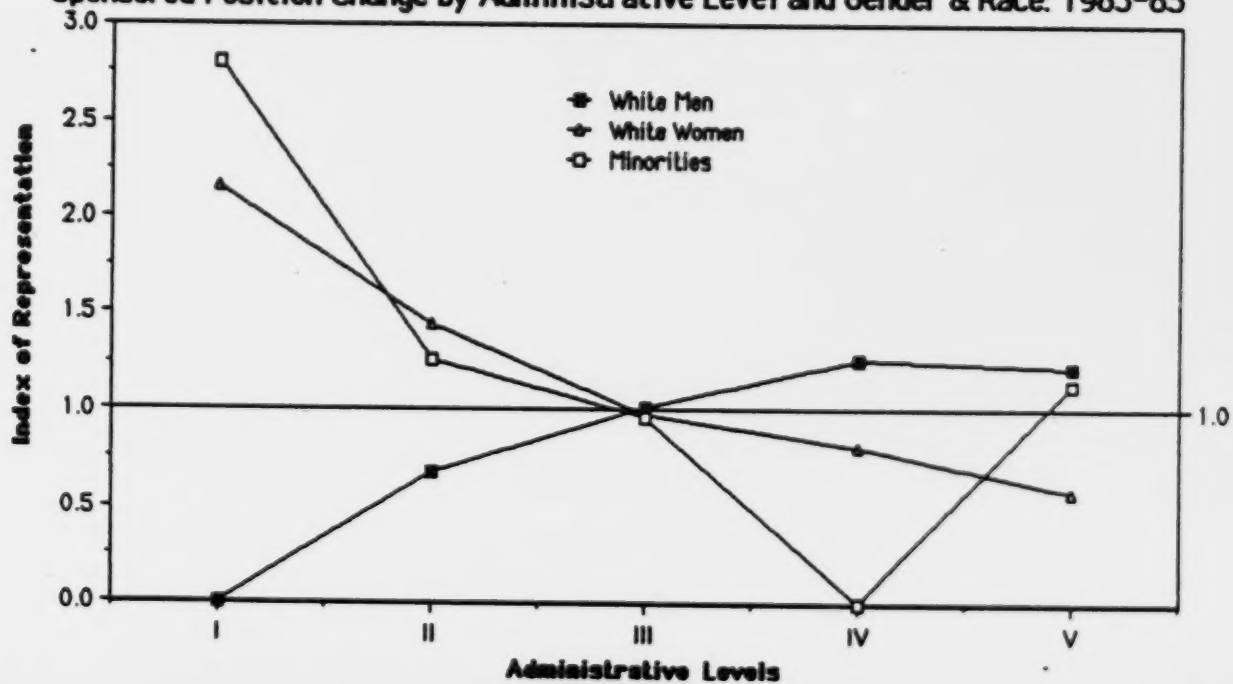


Figure 9

New Position Change by Administrative Level and Gender & Race: 1983-85

